



City of Seattle

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Nick Licata, President
Seattle City Council
Seattle City Hall
P.O. Box 34025
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

July 21, 2006

Council President Licata,

The Seattle Planning Commission is pleased to share with the City Council our comments and recommendations on the Mayor's Bridging the Gap initiative. The Planning Commission supports the initiative and offers the following observations.

Investments in Seattle's deteriorating transportation infrastructure are long overdue. Continuing a process of incremental investment is not satisfactory. By saving money today, the pain is only aggravated by underperforming infrastructure, costly delays and more expensive fixes in the future. We believe the scope of the need for road improvements greatly exceeds what is available from the general fund; and therefore, we support a special initiative. Recent tax-limiting initiatives have greatly compromised the City's ability to find money to address even the most fundamental of infrastructure maintenance. We urge you to adopt the full scope of this initiative in order to adequately address Seattle's transportation needs.

Obviously, resources and timing will be key aspects of your discussion. Our opinion is that part of what makes this initiative so compelling is that it attempts to address the entire backlog of infrastructure repairs. Anything less than this bold move would find us in a position of having spent a significant amount of money only to be in the same situation 20 years down the road. Any alterations to this proposal should be in keeping with the overall spirit of taking bold action to solve a serious problem.

The Planning Commission stands ready to assist you as you consider this initiative.

Sincerely,

Jerry Finrow, Chair
Seattle Planning Commission

CC: Mayor Greg Nickels
City Councilmembers
Grace Crunican, Director – SDOT
Susan Sanchez - SDOT
Mike Mann, OPM

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